

Advertising

History

Claude Hopkins

Claude Hopkins (1866-1932) was a pioneer who wrote the groundbreaking book *Scientific Advertising*. He developed the concept of "reason why" advertising. He first cut his teeth designing ads for the Bissell Carpet Sweeper Company.

Helen Lansdowne

Helen Lansdowne (1886-1964) was a famous copywriter known for her work for Woodbury's Facial Soaps and Pond's Cold Cream. She was the first woman to present ads to the board of Procter & Gamble.

Raymond Rubicam

Raymond Rubicam was the co-founder of prodigious ad firm Young & Rubicam. He managed to get pollster George Gallup to join Y&R, where he formed the first advertising research department.

Basics

Advertisers refer to the standard communications model of a *source* transmitting a *message* through a *channel* (which contains a degree of *noise*) to a *target*. *Feedback* is received by the source in response to the message. Good feedback typically comes in the form of money spent on the product advertised.

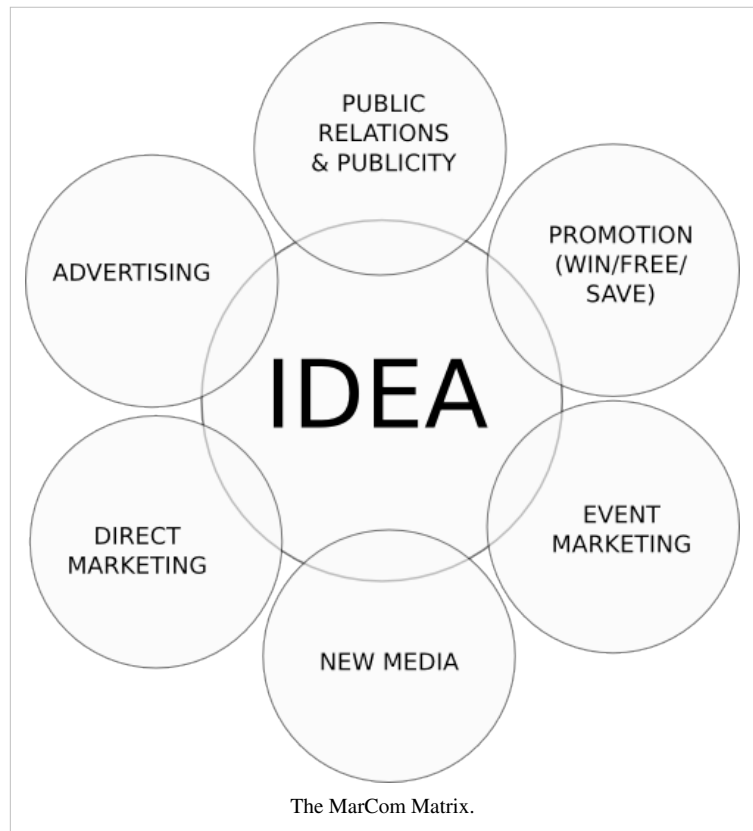
Customer Relations Management (CRM) is concerned with (among other things) the **conversion rate**: percentage of customers who "try and buy" the product.

There are three types of appeals in advertising: logical, ethical, and emotional.

Advertising is just one way to spend your marketing dollar. There are a variety of ways to promote a product, collectively called Marketing Communications (MarCom). They are illustrated by the MarCom Matrix.

Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is an attractive alternative to advertising. MPR uses public relations techniques as part of a marketing campaign. PR tools used by marketers include newsletters, events, endorsements, demonstrations, contests, and interviews.

There are two main types of promotion: **trade promotion** and **consumer promotion**. The differences in ad strategies are characterized as "push" and "pull": trade promotions are designed to *push* the product (into the market), and consumer promotions are made to *pull* the product (into the shopping cart).



Promotions

The three types of promotions are **Win**, **Free**, and **Save**.

Win

Examples of "win"-type promotions are games and contests. Sweepstakes are probably the most popular "win" promotion. According to US law, purchase cannot be necessary to win a sweepstakes. If purchase were necessary, that would make it a lottery; and lotteries can only be conducted by the state.

Free

A "free"-type promotion offers the consumer something for no charge. These are **premiums** (buy one product, get another for a discount, or for free), **bonus packs** ("more for less"), and **sampling** (free samples). A **continuity program** is a free-type promotion that makes the consumer part of a "club". An example of this are coffee shops that give their customers a card that is punched or stamped each time they buy coffee; after a certain number of purchases are made, they are given a free coffee.

Save

Examples of "save" promotions are coupons, rebates, and other money-saving ads. Another is the FSI (Free-Standing Insert), a sheet of coupons typically inserted into newspapers.

Strategies

When planning your advertisement, you should first define your product's Unique Selling Proposition (USP). To find the USP, ask yourself "How is this product different?"

Make a list of your product's pros and cons. This will help you think about what message you want your ad to send.

Positioning is an attempt to place a product into a certain category in consumers' minds: "the best", for example (best deodorant, best soda, etc.) ("The best" is, however, extremely difficult to establish for a new brand). Types of positioning are **Against** (eg, Hertz vs. Avis, 7-up vs. colas), **Niche** (a sub-division of a category), **New**, and **Traditional**.

A Brand Character Statement sets the tone for an entire campaign.

A simple way to start planning your advertisement is with this statement: "Advertising will ____A____ ____B____ that ____C____ is ____D____. Support will be ____E____. Tone will be ____F____." where A is a verb, B is a target demographic (such as, "girls between 14-18 years old"), C is your product, D is an adjective or phrase. E is what the meat of your ad will be. F is your ad's "attitude".

For example, "Advertising will *convince artistic types age 18-35 that Apple computers are hip and cool*. Support will be *two men discussing Macs and PCs*. Tone will be *humorous*."

Part B of this strategy statement is the target audience. Advertisers use many methods to gain information about this group, including demographics, psychographics (how the target thinks), and focus groups.

Part C is the product itself. Advertisers spend time studying this as well. Important questions to ask are "Why would anybody buy this?" "What's the product's advantage?" and "What is the client's image?" The last one is important to consider in order to make sure that your ad doesn't jar with the public perception the company has created for itself. For example, hip or edgy ads probably won't go over well with a company that has a public image of being "conservative" and/or "family friendly."

Support is anything that can demonstrate or otherwise back up the premise presented in the first sentence. Some examples are facts (e.g., statistics), images, or a scenario.

- **Reason Why** - How a product delivers a benefit.
- **Combination** - Two or more benefits are demonstrated.
- **Permission to Believe** - A clever story or character(s) make claim(s) believable.
- **Nine-Wheel Logic** - Specious support used when real support would be too awkward.
- **Image** - An attitude or lifestyle that advertiser attempts to link to product.

A strong "call to action" is another element used to good effect.

Exercises

1. Pick 5 products and write up USPs for them.
2. Pick 10 products and write a strategic statement for each one using the formula above.
3. For each of the 5 types of support mentioned above, find one ad that exemplifies it.
4. Choose a brand and reposition it.

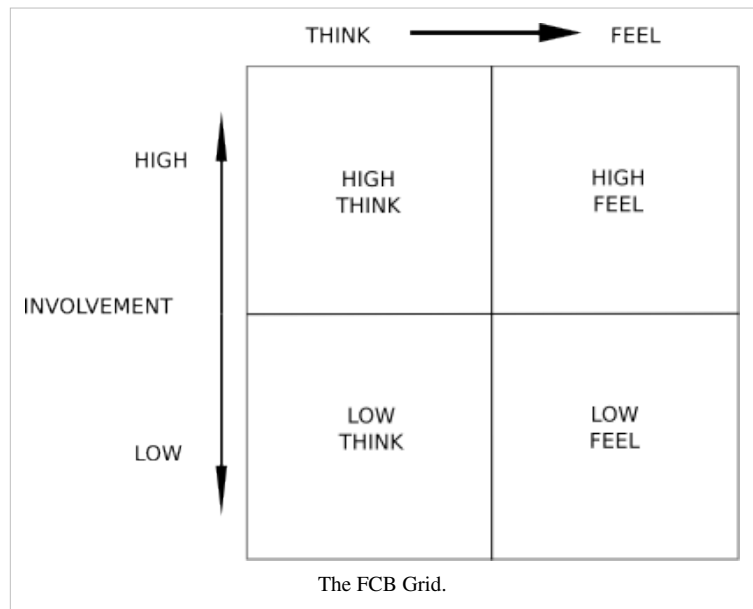
The FCB Grid

The FCB Grid was created by Richard Vaughn. With this model, messages are categorized by "thinking" and "feeling", "low" and "high."

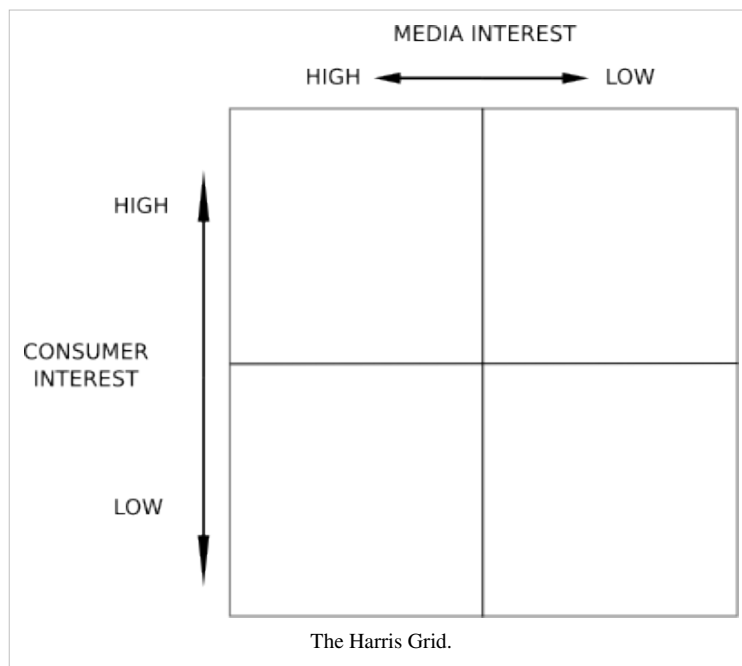
- Low Think (practicality, pragmatism)
- High Think
- Low Feel (sensuality, pleasure)
- High Feel (product as extension of self)

A **Low Feel** commercial demonstrates the pleasure obtained by using the product. This approach is popular for foods.

A **High Feel** commercial could emphasize how the product makes the consumer hip or cool. This approach is popular for advertising products like clothing, shoes, or sportscars.



The Harris Grid



Tom Harris created the Harris Grid for planning MPR campaigns. It measures a product's level of interest in consumers versus the level of interest in mass media.

Some examples:

- **High Consumer/High Media.** Computers, cars, movies, and high-tech gadgets fall into this category. These products *make* news, so they should have high-profile campaigns.
- **Low Consumer/High Media.** Cereals, vitamins, and medications fall into this category. These products also make news, but are not very interesting to consumers. It is therefore important to highlight new scientific findings that are beneficial to the product's image.

Y&R Creative Workplan

The firm of Young & Rubicam have a process called the "Creative Workplan." This crafts a strategy that plans how to attain an *objective*, which solves a *problem*, defined by a **key fact**. In other words, the advertising is designed in order to solve a problem. For example, the problem may be low sales, or a need to change the corporation's image.

To start, define the problem and identify the key fact showing the cause of it. Then, state your objective (what to do to solve the problem).

The four parts of the Creative Workplan's Creative Strategy are:

1. **Prospect Definition** - The "prospect" referred to here is the demographic you are aiming your ad at (also known as a target audience). How is the product used by the prospect? Use demographics and psychographics.
2. **Principal Competition** - Why would the consumer buy the competition's product instead?
3. **Consumer Benefit or Promise** - What does the product do for the prospect?
4. **Reason Why** - Rationale for how a product delivers on its claim (e.g., "Avocados are good for you because they contain 'heart-healthy' fats that help lower cholesterol")

GE Focus System

- **Focus on the Receiver**
- **Focus on the Proposition**
- **Dramatize the Proposition** - "Break the boredom barrier!"

Return on Investment (ROI) System

The ROI System was designed the firm of DDB/Needham. While covering the same territory as other systems (the target, a product claim, support for the claim) it also looks at creating a corporate "personality", as well as personality of individual products. Another important aspect of the ROI System is "aperture": the timing and placement of the ad to maximize success. The system helps you to determine the cheapest media for the greatest impact.

The Ladder

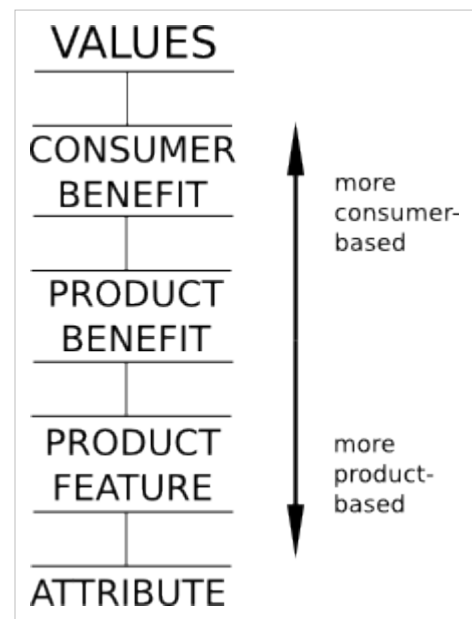
Types of advertising messages can be arranged in a hierarchical ladder, based on what perspective they use to discuss the product.

- Values (*This product makes me Y*)
- Consumer Benefit (*This product helps me Y*)
- Product Benefit (*X does Y*)
- Product Feature (*X can do Y*)
- Attribute (*X is Y*)

The further up the ladder you go, the more *consumer-based* the message becomes. The further down you go, the more *product-based* it becomes. You can see that the first two statements tell how the product helps the consumer ("me"), while the other statements focus more and more on the product (X).

Here are some examples:

- Values (*Axe Body Spray makes me irresistible to women*)



Try/Keep/Retry

This strategy works on three types of customers: future, current, and past. Instead of just trying to get new customers, work on maintaining current ones, and find out how to bring former customers back.

- TRY to get new customers
- KEEP current customers
- RETRY former customers

TRY techniques focus on offers to bring in new customers, and something to bring them back (a "bounceback").

KEEP techniques work on increasing current customers' frequency of purchases and "ticket size" (how much money they spend).

RETRY techniques attempt to figure out why the customer left the company, and how to give them a reason to return.

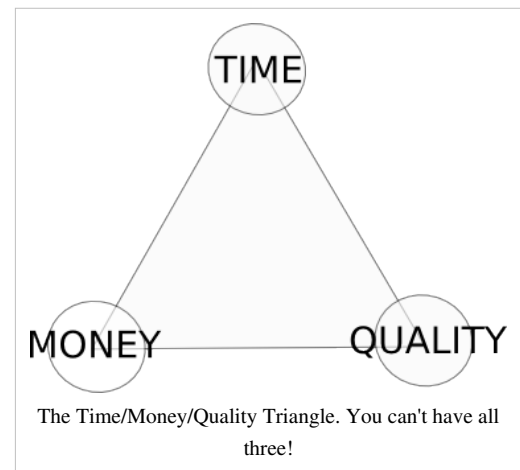
Brainstorming

The Time/Money/Quality Triangle

The Time/Money/Quality Triangle illustrates an advertising truism, that "you can't have all three." If there is little time or money, then ad quality will suffer. The more time and/or money that is available to the project, the higher the quality can be. However, the level of quality must be appropriate to the product...not all products should have high-quality ads!

In her book *Hitting the Sweet Spot: How Consumer Insights Can Inspire Better Marketing and Advertising*, Lisa Fortini-Campbell argues that an advertising "sweet spot" can be attained by combining consumer insight and brand insight.

A **concept board** can be used to demonstrate your ad campaign to your client. These boards (often quite large, so they can be appreciated by a group) outline the core idea of your campaign, a "key visual", and perhaps some bullet points.



Political

Tony Schwartz pioneered the concept of "resonance". Some of his most well-known work are his political ads. One of his TV ads for Lyndon Johnson's 1964 presidential campaign against Barry Goldwater was legendary. As a little girl picked petals off a daisy, a voice counted down from 10, followed by a nuclear explosion. Known as *Daisy*, this commercial is considered to be instrumental in Johnson's victory.

Another well-known political ad that is believed to have tipped an election are the anti-Dukakis, "Willie Horton" ads during the 1988 presidential campaign of Michael Dukakis and George Bush. Willie Horton was a convict serving time for murder in Massachusetts. When Dukakis was governor of Massachusetts, he escaped while on furlough and raped someone. This incident was alluded to in Republican ads, attempting to convince the public that Horton's escape showed that the Democrats were soft on crime. Like the Daisy ad, it is believed that the ad was instrumental in Bush's victory.

Radio

Important aspects of a radio ad are duration and tempo. Some ways to use tempo include pausing for emphasis, and making the tone competitive or mellow. Radio advertisers try to make a "natural rhythm": using emphasis to create beats in words and phrases.

Types

- **Pitch** - An announcer talking.
- **Situation** - A dramatization, or "story"
- **Song**

Other types of radio ads are combinations of these three:

- **Bed** - Pitch with a Song background.
- **Donut** - A Song with a Pitch in the middle.
- **Tag** - A Song with a Pitch at the end.
- **Vignette** - A Pitch, followed by a Situation, followed by a Song

The basic structure of a radio ad is Context (beginning), Content (middle), Conclusion (end).

Print

There are six types of print ads: **One-Liner**, **News**, **Spiral**, **Story**, **Sermon**, and **Outline**.

Print ads use a combination of headlines, subheadings, body text and/or images. Often, there is a logo or slug, for brand identification, as well.

To be effective, headlines must be attention-grabbing. They should "draw in" a viewer. A headline should also be a complete message.

Types of headlines are **News**, **Questions**, and **Testimonials**.

However, it has been estimated that only 10% of readers will actually read an ad. So, make sure the product appears in a picture or is mentioned in the headline.

Direct Marketing

Direct Marketing is mailed to the target audience. One type of mailing is sent in a standard business envelope. The envelope-mailing has many parts: the **Insert**, **Letter**, **Brochure**, and **BRE (Business Reply Envelope)**, as well as the **Envelope** itself. The mailing may have some of these elements, or all of them.

The first key to a successful envelope mailing is to get your target to open it. Obviously, if the target doesn't open the envelope and read some of the material, your money is wasted. The envelope may have exhortations to get the recipient to open the letter (e.g., "URGENT!").

The Insert is a small one or two-sided sheet of paper with a summary of the mailing. If you want to use bullet points, here's a good place to put them.

For the Letter, have a good first line that hooks them. Try to hit on a topic of discontent for the reader (which your product will solve). Avoid talking about the company or the product's history. Talk about the reader, and his/her interests. Make sure to sum up the product's main points in the first paragraph. Repeat those benefits often throughout the letter.

The "Lift" Note is a trifold pamphlet, often with testimonials extolling the worthiness of the product. It may end with a closer ("But wait...there's more!").

The Business Reply Envelope is a postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope to make it easy for the target to reply. You should use a BRE even if you supply a "more convenient" method of reply or payment.

Television

One important thing to remember is that a TV commercial has many more variables than a print or radio ad. This means that there is much more that can go wrong. It is important to decide, during early planning stages, what the job positions for the ad will be (art directors, copywriters, video technicians, etc.), and who will fulfill each one.

To make a rough draft of the ad, storyboards or animatics are used. (Animatics are like an animated storyboard.)

The three stages of making a TV ad are: Planning, Production, and Post-production.

Types

The six types of TV commercials are **Slice**, **Talking Person**, **Demo**, **Visual**, **Graphic Collage**, and **Combination**.

The **Slice**, or "Slice of Life", is a dramatization (story). To make an effective Slice, create a situation where the product plays a key role. Make it simple and interesting.

A **Talking Person** presents a spokesman for the brand (e.g. Jack-in-the-Box's Jack, or Wendy's Dave Thomas). A testimonial commercial is a type of Talking Person.

A **Demo** is a presentation of the product's usage. Typical Demo types are:

- *Side-by-Side*: The product is pitted against its competition (or imaginary competition, such as "Brand X").
- *Before and After*: Demonstration of the problem and solution.
- *Product Performance*: An exhibition of the product's strengths.
- *In-Use* and *New-Use*: In-Use shows the product being used. New-Use shows a new use for an old product.
- *Torture Test*: An (often humorous) demonstration of the product's durability.

A torture test is an "extreme" demonstration of a product performance, not durability.

The **Visual** primarily uses imagery to sell the product.

Graphic Collage is a postmodern style often used in music videos. It appropriates audio and video, and may employ **supers** (super-imposition).

A **Combination** uses two or more of these types together.

Planning

Planning steps:

1. Start at the end. Decide what the ad's final impact will be.
2. Plan visuals.
3. Plan movement.

The beginning provides context. Common mistakes encountered here are overwriting, audience confusion, and irrelevancy.

The middle connects the target to the brand. Here is where the support is given. This part requires extreme clarity.

The end presents the ad's punchline, or final thought. A logo or other brand identification is typically displayed here.

Make pre-production notes. Things to include are

- Location (*Where will the footage be shot?*)
- Talent (*Who will be acting? Providing music?*)
- Special effects (if any)
- Props (if any)
- Bids & budgeting (*How will we pay for this?*)
- Scheduling

Profiling consumers: Know your audience. Be careful not to offend them!

You're not just selling a product, you're selling an *image*.

Extreme close-ups of the product are used to create a sense of intimacy.

Sometimes conceptual art (storyboards, etc.) turn out to be unrealistic (such as a winking dog in a dog food commercial). This is called the "Winking Dog Syndrome". The question to ask is: "Can the final cut meet the expectations made by the design?"

A similar problem, the "Rubber Pencil", comes about when impossible proportions or angles create problems with the ad during production. It is important to resolve all these issues during the planning stages.

Production

Make a "shot list." Make sure that only one person talks to the director, to avoid confusion.

Post-Production

Audio post-production involves "direct voice" (synchronized to video) or "voice tracks" (such as announcers), as well as music and sound effects.

Video post-production includes usage of animation and addition of stock footage. *Pre-scoring* is preparing audio before video, and *post-scoring* is preparing audio after video.

Direct Response Television (DRTV) often takes the form of infomercials.

Ethics

Advertisers, like lawyers, are sometimes criticized for the clients they accept, and the messages they send. Advertising is arguably a powerful tool that can be used to influence the masses to a large extent. Therefore, it is important that advertisers be made aware of their responsibilities to the public good.

Feminist Criticism

Social critics like Jean Kilbourne have blamed many of women's image problems on commercials. In her film series *Killing Us Softly*, Kilbourne argues that ads deliver powerful messages that shape women's self-images. She claims these ads equate romance and success with normalcy, and make it appear that beauty is the most important concern of women. Furthermore, ads perpetuate a stereotype of the "perfect" woman, implying that this goal is attainable by buying the right beauty products, diet aids, etc. In reality, only about 5% of women have model bodies. Kilbourne also points out that ads containing both sexes often have the male literally looking down on the female, implying a subtle sexism.



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